

Message Text

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ACTION INR-07

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AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMCONSUL KRAKOW POUCH
AMCONSUL POZNAN POUCH

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 WARSAW 0376

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT PL
SUBJ: LETTER OF FOURTEEN VETERAN COMMUNISTS TO GIEREK

REF: STATE 5315 NOTAL

1. THE EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED A COPY OF THE OCTOBER, 1977, LETTER FROM "14 FORMER POLITICAL FIGURES" TO PZPR FIRST SECRETARY EDWARD GIEREK FROM A SOURCE IN THE MOVEMENT FOR THE DEFENSE OF HUMAN AND CIVIL RIGHTS (ROPCO). IBHE LETTER RUNS 3-1/2 CLOSELY TYPED PAGES. IT PAINTS A DOUR PICTURE OF CONTEMPORARY POLAND, WHERE, IT SAYS, BOTH THE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC SITUATIONS ARE BAD. THE QUIET IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE JUNE, 1976, DISTURBANCES "IS ILLUSORY. RATHER, THE CRISIS OF CONFIDENCE DEEPENS AND BECOMES MORE WIDE-SPREAD. . . STRIKING SHORTAGES OF FOOD AND INDUSTRIAL ARTICLES ON THE MARKET AND HIDDEN MASSIVE PRICE RISES CREATE AN ATMOSPHERE

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OF DISSATISFACTION AND NERVOUSNESS."

THE LETTER CRITICIZES THE REGIME FOR THE LOPSIDED STRUCTURE OF INVESTMENT, IMPULSIVENESS IN THE FORMULATION OF INCOME POLICY FOR WORKERS, AN ILL-CONSIDERED AGRICULTURAL POLICY, AND IRRATIONAL USE OF FOREIGN CREDITS. IT ASSERTS THAT THE PZPR HAS DONE NOTHING TO CORRECT ECONOMIC IMBALANCES AND ALLEVIATE THE DIS-

ORGANIZATION IN ECONOMIC LIFE. "THE 'ECONOMIC MANEUVER' UNDERTAKEN BY THE PARTY CANNOT ACHIEVE ITS GOALS AND LACKS THE SUPPORT OF THE PEOPLE."

3. ACCORDING TO THE LETTER, ONLY AN AUTHENTIC CONSULTATION WITHIN THE PARTY AND WITH ALL SEGMENTS OF SOCIETY CAN RESTORE CONFIDENCE IN THE PZPR. WITHIN THE PARTY THERE MUST BE GREATER FREEDOM OF DISCUSSION. "WE HAVE THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE CAPABLE OF UNDERTAKING INITIATIVES." BUT THEIR HANDS ARE TIED BY A "MACHINE THAT DIRECTS THE PARTY BUREAUCRATICALLY IN A WAY CONTRARY TO ITS DEMOCRATIC AND SOCIAL ESSENCE. THIS MACHINE PROMOTES AN ABSENCE OF IDEALS, INSINCERITY, TORPOR, AND THE LOSS OF INITIATORY CHARACTER OF PARTY ORGANIZATIONS . . . THE MECHANICAL AND ERRONEOUS UNDERSTANDING OF THE PARTY'S LEADING ROLE STANDS, IN THE WAY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF DEMOCRATIC FORCES IN THE PARTY . . . IT IS NECESSARY ALSO TO DETERMINE THE REAL PLACE AND ROLE OF THE PARTY APPARATUS WHICH SHOULD FULFILL A SERVICE FUNCTION FOR ELECTED PARTY ORGANS AND IN NO CASE CAN LAY A CLAIM TO DIRECTION AND COMMAND OVER PARTY ORGANIZATIONS, PARTY ACTIVISTS, AND THE STATE APPARATUS."

4. THE LETTER SAYS IT IS NECESSARY TO FORMULATE A CLEAR PROGRAM OF POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC REFORM "GUARANTEEING THE REAL INFLUENCE OF PUBLIC OPINION ON THE RANGE OF ISSUES IN THE COUNTRY AND ASSERTS THAT ALL SOCIAL, CULTURAL, AND SELF-GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS SHOULD CHOOSE THEIR OFFICIALS IN A GENUINELY DEMOCRATIC CONFIDENTIAL

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FASHION." IT IS "NECESSARY DECISIVELY TO DISCOURAGE PARTY INTERVENTION IN THEIR DAILY ACTIVITY BECAUSE THAT WEAKENS ACTIVITY AND INITIATIVE, AND DESTROYS THE PRINCIPLES OF SELF-GOVERNMENT."

5. OF THE 14 PERSONS WHO SIGNED THE LETTER, THE EMBASSY HAS NO INFORMATION ABOUT WINCENTY HEINRICH, CEZARY JOZEFIAK, OR JERZY SZACKI. NONE OF THE OTHERS HAS HELD A POSITION OF MAJOR INFLUENCE SINCE 1968. SEVERAL DISAPPEARED FROM PUBLIC LIFE MUCH EARLIER. THE MOST PROMINENT IS EDWARD OCHAB, PZPR FIRST SECRETARY FROM MARCH TO OCTOBER, 1956, OUSTED AS CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL OF STATE IN MARCH, 1968. JERZY ALBRECHT, PZPR CENTRAL COMMITTEE SECRETARY FROM 1956-1960, WAS DISMISSED FROM HIS POST AS MINISTER OF FINANCE IN 1968. JERZY MORAWSKI'S FALL FROM GRACE WAS MORE GRADUAL. SWEEPED INTO THE POLITBURO IN THE WAKE OF OCTOBER, 1956, HE LOST HIS SEAT IN 1960. AFTER FOUR YEARS IN LIMBO AS VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE SUPREME CHAMBER OF CONTROL, HE SERVED AS AMBASSADOR TO GREAT BRITAIN FROM 1964 TO 1969. HE WAS APPOINTED HEAD OF THE POLISH INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS (PISM) IN 1969, WAS DEMOTED TO DEPUTY CHIEF IN 1971, AND VANISHED FROM THE EDITORIAL RANKS OF PISM'S PUBLICATION IN APRIL, 1976. WLADYSLAW MATWIN WAS DROPPED FROM THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE IN 1964 AFTER HE LOST HIS JOB AS FIRST PARTY SECRETARY IN WROCLAW IN 1963. MIECZYSLAW

MARZEC, PARTY FIRST SECRETARY BY BYDGOSZCZ IN 1958, DIRECTOR OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL DEPARTMENT OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE PZPR IN 1960, WAS FIRST SECRETARY OF THE ALL-POLISH COMMITTEE OF THE FRONT FOR NATIONAL UNITY IN 1966, AND WAS REMOVED FROM THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE IN 1968. JANUSZ ZARZYCKI WAS DEPUTY MINISTER OF DEFENSE 1956-1960, MAYOR OF WARSAW 1960-1968, AND CHAIRMAN OF ZBOWID, THE VETERANS' ORGANIZATION, 1960-1964. THE REMAINDER ARE LESSER LIGHTS. ANDRZEJ BURDA WAS APPOINTED PROCURATOR GENERAL OF POLAND IN 1957. OUR FILES DO NOT SHOW WHEN HE WAS REPLACED. SZYMON JAKUBOWICZ BECAME THE EDITOR OF THE ECONOMIC SECTION OF ZYCIE WARSZAWY, THE WARSAW MASS-CIRCULATION DAILY, IN 1953. AGAIN, WE DO NOT KNOW HOW LONG HE HELD THIS POSITION. JULAIN KOLE WAS A MEMBER OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE PZPR FROM 1948 TO 1964. HE WAS FIRED FROM HIS POSITION AS VICE-
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MINISTER OF FINANCE IN 1968. SOCIOLOGIST JAN STRZELECKI WAS SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNION OF POLISH JOURNALISTS IN THE FIFTIES. ZOFIA ZAKRZEWSKA SERVED AS HEAD OF THE POLISH SCOUTS FROM 1956 TO 1964.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 WARSAW 0376

6. COMMENT: THE LETTER READS LIKE A COMPENDIUM OF COMPLAINTS LEVELED AGAINST THE GIEREK REGIME IN RECENT YEARS. DATED SIMPLY "OCTOBER, 1977", IT PRESUMABLY WAS SENT TO GIEREK BEFORE THE NINTH PLENUM OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE PZPR, OCTOBER 9-10. ROPCO RELEASED IT TO THE PUBLIC VIA WESTERN JOURNALISTS ON THE OCCASION OF GIEREK'S 65TH BIRTHDAY ON JANUARY 6, AND ON THE EVE OF THE SECOND COUNTRYWIDE CONFERENCE OF THE PZPR, JANUARY 9-10.

7. THE ANALYSIS OF THE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC SITUATION IN POLAND, THOUGH COGENT, IS, AS THE AUTHORS ACKNOWLEDGE, HARDLY NEW. NOR DO THE SIGNERS CONSTITUTE A THREAT TO ESTABLISHED AUTHORITY. WHATEVER PROMINENCE THEY ACHIEVED WAS IN THE EARLY YEARS OF GOMULKA'S REIGN, AND MOST FELL FROM POWER BEFORE HIS DEMISE. SOME OF THE SIGNERS, ALBRECHT, MORAWSKI, MATWIN, AND OCHAB, WERE KNOWN AS "LIBERALS" IN THE GOMULKA PERIOD, BUT IT IS DOUBTFUL THEY EVER FORMED A COHESIVE BLOC. OCHAB, FOR EXAMPLE, CONFIDENTIAL

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PRESIDED OVER THE DISMISSAL OF MATWIN FROM HIS POSITION AS PARTY FIRST SECRETARY IN WROCLAW AT A PROVINCIAL PZPR PLENUM IN 1963. ALL HAVE BEEN OUTSIDERS FOR AT LEAST A DECADE, AND NONE COULD REALISTICALLY HOPE FOR A POLITICAL COMEBACK, EVEN IF THEIR ADVICE WERE HEEDED. OF THE MEMBERS OF THE GROUP ON WHOM WE HAVE INFORMATION, MARZEC, AT 52, IS THE YOUNGEST AND THE ONLY ONE BORN AS LATE AS THE TWENTIES. AS FAR AS WE KNOW, MOST HAD EARLIER SILENTLY ACCEPTED THEIR FATES. OCHAB SENT A LETTER TO GIEREK IN 1971 IN WHICH HE DENOUNCED THE POLICIES OF GOMULKA. JAN STRZELECKI WROTE A LETTER IN SUPPORT OF THE WARSAW HUNGER STRIKERS IN MAY, 1977. ANY CRITICAL THOUGHTS HARBORED BY THE OTHERS HAVE NOT, UNTIL NOW, LEAKED OUT TO THE PUBLIC.

8. IT IS CURIOUS THAT ROPCO WAS THE VEHICLE BY WHICH THE LETTER REACHED WESTERN CORRESPONDENTS. SOME PASSAGES IN THE LETTER READ LIKE A TRACT FROM ROPCO'S MONTHLY OPINIA, E.G., THE POINTED CRITICISM OF GOVERNMENT ECONOMIC POLICIES AND THE APPEAL FOR GREATER INVOLVEMENT OF ALL SECTORS OF SOCIETY IN POLITICAL LIFE. PERHAPS THIS COINCIDENCE OF VIEWS ENCOURAGED ROPCO TO RELEASE THE LETTER. OTHERWISE, ROPCO, WHICH HAS REPEATEDLY STRESSED ITS ANTI-MARXIST ORIENTATION, SEEMS OUT OF CHARACTER IN DISSEMINATING COMMUNIST DISSENT. THE COMMITTEE FOR SOCIAL SELF-DEFENSE (KOR-KSS), COMPOSED LARGELY OF DISSIDENT MARXISTS, WOULD SEEM A MORE LIKELY CANDIDATE. BE THAT AS IT MAY, THE LETTER, TAKEN AT FACE VALUE, IS A VALID CRITIQUE BY POWERLESS PEOPLE OF PARTY POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, AND SOCIAL POLICY THAT WILL IN ALL LIKELIHOOD HAVE LITTLE OR NO IMPACT ON THE FORMULATION OF THAT POLICY. END COMMENT.

DAVIES

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